

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1. (Original) A method for enumerating microbial colonies in a sample comprising:

- (a) transferring a sample comprising a microbe(s) of interest in a liquid medium to the wells of a multi-well filter plate;
- (b) removing excess media from the wells;
- (c) allowing sufficient time for the microbe(s) to grow into discrete colonies on residual growth media captured within and under the filter plate; and
- (d) enumerating the microbial colonies in the sample by using a means suitable for enumeration of samples in multi-well format.

Claim 2. (Original) A method in accordance with claim 1 wherein the microbe(s) are bacteria and the microbial colonies are bacterial colonies.

Claim 3. (Withdrawn) A method in accordance with claim 1 wherein the microbe(s) are yeast and the microbial colonies are colonies of yeast.

Claim 4. (Withdrawn) A method in accordance with claim 1 wherein the microbe(s) are fungi and the microbial colonies are fungal colonies.

Claims 5-20. (Canceled)

Claim 21. (Withdrawn) A method in accordance with claim 18 wherein the effector cell is a differentiated HL-60 cell.

Claim 22. (Withdrawn) A method in accordance with claim 18 wherein the effector cell is a peripheral blood polymorphonuclear leukocyte.

Claim 23. (Original) A method in accordance with claim 2 wherein the bacteria is a gram-positive bacteria.

Claim 24. (Withdrawn) A method in accordance with claim 2 wherein the bacteria is a gram-negative bacteria.

Claim 25. (Original) A method in accordance with claim 2 wherein the bacteria is a pathogenic microorganism.

Claim 26. (Original) A method in accordance with claim 2 wherein the bacteria is *Streptococcus pneumoniae*.

Claim 27. (Withdrawn) A method in accordance with claim 2 wherein the bacteria is *Neisseria meningitidis*.

Claim 28. (Withdrawn) A method in accordance with claim 2 wherein the bacteria is *Escherichia coli*.

Claim 29. (Withdrawn) A method in accordance with claim 2 wherein the bacteria is *Staphylococcus aureus*.

Claim 30. (Withdrawn) A method in accordance with claim 2 wherein the bacteria is *Bacillus anthracis*.

Claim 31. (Withdrawn) A method for analyzing microbe(s), their growth and/or viability in a sample comprising:

- (a) transferring a sample comprising a microbe(s) of interest in a liquid medium to the wells of a multi-well filter plate;
- (b) removing excess media from the wells;
- (c) allowing sufficient time for the microbe(s) to grow into discrete colonies on residual growth media captured within and under the filter plate; and
- (d) analyzing the microbe(s), their growth and/or viability in the sample by a means suitable for analysis of samples in multi-well format.

Claim 32. (Withdrawn) A method in accordance with claim 30 wherein the microbe(s) are bacteria.

Claim 33. (Withdrawn) A method in accordance with claim 30 wherein the microbe(s) are yeast.

Claim 34. (Withdrawn) A method in accordance with claim 30 wherein the microbe(s) are fungi.

Claim 35. (Withdrawn) A method in accordance with claim 30 wherein the multi-well filter plate of step (a) comprises growth medium.

Claim 36. (Withdrawn) A method in accordance with claim 33 wherein the multi-well filter plate is a 96 well filter plate.

Claim 37. (Withdrawn) A method in accordance with claim 31 wherein the bacteria are grown for a period of 14-18 hours.

Claim 38. (Withdrawn) A method in accordance with claim 30 wherein the filter plate is a Millipore™ 96 well HV plate.

Claim 39. (Withdrawn) A method in accordance with claim 30 wherein the filter plate is a Millipore™ Multiscreen™ HV 0.45 µm Opaque Sterile Filtration plate.

Claim 40. (Withdrawn) A method in accordance with claim 30 wherein the excess media is removed by vacuum filtration.

Claim 41. (Withdrawn) A method in accordance with claim 30 wherein the excess media is removed by centrifugation.

Claim 42. (Withdrawn) A method in accordance with claim 30 wherein microbe(s), their growth and/or viability is analyzed with a device capable of acquiring images and/or information from wells in multi-well format.

Claim 43. (Withdrawn) A method in accordance with claim 40 wherein the device is capable of acquiring images and/or information from wells in 96 well format.

Claim 44. (Withdrawn) A method in accordance with claim 41 wherein the number of bacteria in the sample is determined using a computer-assisted video imaging and analysis system.

Claim 45. (Withdrawn) A method in accordance with claim 41 wherein the microbe(s) are analyzed using an ImmunoSpot™ Analyzer.

Claim 46. (Withdrawn) A method in accordance with claim 30 wherein the microbe(s) prior to step (a) had been contacted with an antimicrobial agent.

Claim 47. (Withdrawn) A method in accordance with claim 30 wherein the microbe(s) prior to step (a) had been contacted with antimicrobial antiserum.

Claim 48. (Withdrawn) A method in accordance with claim 44 wherein the microbe(s) prior to step (a) were further contacted with complement or active components thereof.

Claim 49. (Withdrawn) A method in accordance with claim 45 wherein the microbe(s) prior to step (a) were further contacted with an effector cell capable of engulfing the microbe(s).

Claim 50. (Withdrawn) A method in accordance with claim 46 wherein the effector cell is a phagocyte.

Claim 51. (Withdrawn) A method in accordance with claim 46 wherein the effector cell is a differentiated HL-60 cell.

Claim 52. (Withdrawn) A method in accordance with claim 46 wherein the effector cell is a peripheral blood polymorphonuclear leukocyte.

Claim 53. (Withdrawn) A method in accordance with claim 31 wherein the bacteria is a gram-positive bacteria.

Claim 54. (Withdrawn) A method in accordance with claim 31 wherein the bacteria is a gram-negative bacteria.

Claim 55. (Withdrawn) A method in accordance with claim 31 wherein the bacteria is a pathogenic microorganism.

Claim 56. (Withdrawn) A method in accordance with claim 31 wherein the bacteria is *Streptococcus pneumoniae*.

Claim 57. (Withdrawn) A method in accordance with claim 31 wherein the bacteria is *Neisseria meningitidis*.

Claim 58. (Withdrawn) A method in accordance with claim 31 wherein the bacteria is *Escherichia coli*.

Claim 59. (Withdrawn) A method in accordance with claim 31 wherein the bacteria is *Staphylococcus aureus*.

Claim 60. (Withdrawn) A method in accordance with claim 31 wherein the bacteria is *Bacillus anthracis*.

Claim 61. (Withdrawn) A method for evaluating antimicrobial agents comprising:

- (a) contacting a sample comprising a microbe(s) of interest with the antimicrobial agent;
- (b) transferring the sample comprising the microbe(s) of interest in a liquid medium to the wells of a multi-well filter plate;
- (c) removing excess media from the wells;
- (d) allowing sufficient time for the microbe(s) to grow into discrete colonies on residual growth media captured within and under the filter plate; and

- (e) evaluating the effect of the antimicrobial agent on the growth and/or viability of the microbe(s) with a means suitable for analysis of samples in multi-well format.

Claim 62. (Withdrawn) A method for evaluating antimicrobial agents comprising:

- (a) transferring a sample comprising a microbe(s) of interest in a liquid medium to the wells of a multi-well filter plate;
- (b) contacting the sample comprising the microbe(s) of interest with the antimicrobial agent;
- (c) removing excess media from the wells;
- (d) allowing sufficient time for the microbe(s) to grow into discrete colonies on residual growth media captured within and under the filter plate; and
- (e) evaluating the effect of the antimicrobial agent on the growth and/or viability of the microbe(s) with a means suitable for analysis of samples in multi-well format.

Claim 63. (Withdrawn) A method in accordance with claim 59 wherein the antimicrobial agent is a monoclonal antibodies present within hybridoma culture supernatant.